

Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 17, 2024 9:00 AM-1:00 PM

Microsoft Teams

Voting Board Members Present: Alyson Eastman (Deputy Secretary, Agency of Agriculture – designee for Anson Tebbetts, Secretary), Chair; Elisabeth Nance (designee for Lindsay Kurrle, Secretary, Agency of Commerce and Community Development); Katharine Servidio (designee for Danielle Fitzko, Commissioner, Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation); Alisha Utter (Vice Chair, arrives 10:23); Bob Lesnikoski; David Hubbard; Chris Castano; Alex Barrett; Donna Young; Tyler Miller (arrives 9:15); Megan Camp (arrives 9:46); Kathy Murphy-Moriarty (departs 9:25, returns 10:53); Alison Low (departs 9:51, returns 10:11)

Voting Board Members not Present: Will Belongia, Jon Ramsay, Alan Calfee

Non-Voting Board Members Present: None

Non-Voting Board Members not Present: Liz Gleason (designee for Gus Seelig, Executive Director, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board); Sarah Isham (Vermont Economic Development Authority; designee for Cassie Polhemus, CEO); Ellen Kahler (Executive Director, Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund)

Staff: Clare Salerno, Elizabeth Sipple, Trevor Lowell, Lily Bradburn, Abbey Willard, Laura Ginsburg (Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets)

Guests: None

Members of the Public: None

Alyson Eastman calls the meeting to order at 9:07 AM.

MOTION to move to executive session to discuss grant applications and potential awards. WLEB is deliberating potential future contracts, and WLEB will be discussing personal, proprietary and confidential business information that could invade applicants' privacy or otherwise harm them. The underlying records are exempt from disclosure under the public records act. Premature public knowledge of the WLEB's contract deliberations would place WLEB at a substantial disadvantage when negotiating contracts and discussing potential contracts and/or the applicants' personal or confidential business information, which could harm the applicant or put them at a substantial disadvantage. – Alison Low motions, Elisabeth Nance seconds

MOTION passes by unanimous voice vote.

Executive Session begins at 9:09 AM.

Executive Session ends at 12:38 PM. Alyson Eastman stated that in Executive Session, WLEB discussed 38 grant applications and potential approval of grant applications.

MOTION for staff to move forward with negotiating and approving nine applications in the amount of \$370,000 – Alison Low motions, Megan Camp

MOTION passes by unanimous voice vote.

Alyson Eastman stated there are 29 applications on which no action was taken during Executive Session.

MOTION to approve minutes from the November 19, 2024 board meeting – Elisabeth Nance motions, Tyler Miller seconds

MOTION passes by unanimous voice vote. Alison Low abstains.

Administration Updates

- Agriculture, Food & Markets – Alyson Eastman
- Agency of Commerce & Community Development – Elisabeth Nance
- Forest, Parks & Recreation – Katharine Servidio

Other Announcements

- Elizabeth Sipple announced that the Working Lands Coalition is relaunching.

Public Comment – none

MOTION to adjourn – Alison Low motions, Elisabeth Nance seconds

MOTION passes by unanimous voice vote.

Meeting is adjourned by Alyson Eastman at 12:47 PM.

Meeting Materials

- *Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Minutes Draft 10/19/24*
- *Working Lands Enterprise Board Meeting Agenda 12/17/24*
- *FY25 Service Provider & Producer Association Grant Review*